Scientific expansion of coconut cultivation in Kerala

1377. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from Kerala regarding scientific expansion of coconut cultivation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by Government to enhance productivity of coconut; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to ensure good price of coconut?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) For increasing productivity of coconuts, Government of India is implementing following programmes through Coconut Development Board;

(i) Production and distribution of quality planting material:

- ► Establishment of regional coconut Nurseries
- ► Establishment of Demonstration-cum-Seed Production (DSP) Farms for coconut
- ► Setting up coconut nurseries attached to DSP Farms
- ► Aid to registered/privatc/approved nurseries @ Rs. 6 lakh for big units and Rs. 2 lakh for small units.

(ii) Integrated farming for productivity improvement

- ♦ Removal of disease advanced palms by providing assistance @ Rs. 250/- per palm
- ♦ Laying out demonstration plots in farmers field with assistance @ Rs. 35,000/- per ha.

- Aid to organic manure unit @ Rs. 20,000/- per unit.

- Control of sporadic incidence of pests and diseases by adopting integrated Pest Management Practices.

Further, Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), is conducting studies to enhance productivity of coconut and has released high yielding and superior varieties of coconut for commercial cultivation.

(d) Government of India has taken following steps to ensure good price of coconut:

(i) Government of India announced the Minimum Support Price for Milling Copra and Ball Copra and procured copra through National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), when price fell below Minimum Support Price;

(ii) The Coconut Development Board has encouraged market promotion activities for diversified coconut products to stablisc the trend in the price of coconut;

(iii) Productivity increase per tree and adoption of coconut based farming system are stressed in the State for sustainable income per unit area;

(iv) The Coconut Development Board encouraged diversification of coconut products and value-added products;

Attracting Youths Towards Agriculture

1378. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China has beaten India in agriculture;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Indian youths are no longer interested in agriculture; and